

### REMARKS

The applicant has carefully considered the official action dated February 3, 2005, and the references cited therein. In the official action, claims 1-3, 5, 6, 9-15, 17, 18, 21-27, 29, 30, and 33-35 were rejected as anticipated by Futamura et al. (U.S. 5,563,795), and claims 7, 8, 19, 20, 31, and 32 were rejected as unpatentable over Futamura et al. (U.S. 5,563,795) in view of Nakamura et al. (5,422,819). In view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks, the applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of this application.

As an initial matter, the applicant notes that claim 7 has been amended to address the claim objection noted on page 2 of the official action. Accordingly, the applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the objection to this claim. Additionally, claims 19 and 31 have been similarly amended.

Turning to the art rejections, the applicant submits that Futamura et al. fail to teach or suggest identifying a common boundary between adjacent object areas and forming segmented image data based on the common boundary, as recited in independent claim 1. In fact, Futamura et al. are completely silent with respect to the identification of a common boundary between adjacent object areas. Thus, Futamura et al. fail to disclose each and every element recited in claim 1 and, thus, claim 1 cannot be anticipated thereby. Nakamura et al. fail to overcome the above-noted deficiency of Futamura et al. Accordingly, the applicant submits that claim 1 and claims 2-12 dependent thereon are now in condition for allowance.

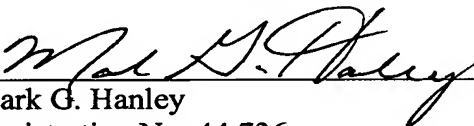
The applicant respectfully submits that claims 13-35 are also in condition for allowance for at least the reasons set forth above in connection with independent claim 1.

Accordingly, the applicant submits that this application and all claims pending therein are now in condition for allowance. If the examiner is of the opinion that a further telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of this case, the examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the number identified below.

Respectfully submitted,

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